

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR	
REVIEWED BY <i>McClary</i>	DATE <i>3-13-81</i>
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE _____	UNCLASSIFIED
TS AUTH. _____	REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐	
DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☒	
RELEASE DENIED ☐	
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____	

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Lib
Dubs Death

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS IN THE DEATH
OF AMBASSADOR DUBS - KABUL, AFGHANISTAN

FEBRUARY 14, 1979

R

(All times Kabul standard; EST in parentheses.)

- 0845 (1115) Ambassador Dubs kidnapped; Embassy immediately contacted DRA Foreign and Interior Ministries.
- 0900- (1130-
0930 0000) Embassy officers arrive at hotel, followed shortly by police and first Soviet police advisor. Embassy officers immediately voiced their concern for Ambassador's safety. Afghans and Soviet advisor assured Embassy officers they shared that concern.
- 0950 (0020) On DCM's instruction, EmbOff reiterated to Afghan police at hotel strong concern for Ambassador's safety and requested that no precipitate action be taken and that Afghans wait for Embassy to receive Department guidance. Soviet and Afghan officials acknowledged but made no commitment.
- 0955 (0025) OpCenter alerted Amb. Quainton, who took action to establish Working Group which was operational at 1040 (0110).
- 1015 (0045)
(approximate) Soviet Embassy security officer arrived at hotel; assured EmbOff of strong Soviet interest in Ambassador's safety. Senior Afghan police official assured EmbOff that all precautions being taken to protect Dubs.
- 1040 (0110) Amb. Quainton arrived at OpCenter and took charge of Working Group operations.
- 1050 (0120) Quainton called DOD re movement of DAO aircraft from Islamabad, possible dispatch of anti-terrorist expert and other matters.
- 1055 (0125) Working Group undertook to inform Mrs. Dubs in Washington.

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- 1115 (0145) Working Group sent cable endorsing Embassy's efforts to urge DRA avoid precipitate action and offer USG assistance.
- 1115 (0145) (approximate) EmbOff and local national employee arrived at Ministry of Interior to see Police Commissioner Taroon; were kept waiting in outer office.
- 1120 (0150) Embassy officers observed Afghan police moving ladders against outside of hotel and arrival of Afghans with commando badges at hotel.
- 1125 (0155) EmbOff notified Embassy that police action against terrorists could be imminent. At Embassy's request, EmbOffs again urged police to be patient.
- 1137 (0207) Embassy reported Ambassador was seen at hotel window apparently unharmed.
- 1140 (0210) Afghan security official asked EmbOff to talk to Ambassador through door in German to ask about terrorist armament and tell him to go to bathroom in ten minutes and drop to floor. EmbOff demurred on latter point out of concern it might encourage police assault.
- 1140 (0210) DCM talked twice with Deputy Foreign Minister Dost and tried to phone Acting Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister Amin. EmbOff dispatched to palace to give DCM's message to Amin.
- 1156 (0226) Embassy reported Dost had assured EmbOff that DRA would do everything possible to secure Ambassador's safe release. Dost said Amin personally supervising developments; that DRA had received no demands yet, that Dubs was unharmed.

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- 1200 (0230) Soviet Embassy officer revealed to EmbOff that kidnappers had set time deadlines; first one of which, "noontime", had already passed. He thought deadline had been extended to 1300. Firemen with picks and axes arrived at hotel. Photo of Ambassador was shown to all members of assault force.
- 1200 (0230) Direct phone line established with Kabul (poor connection). DCM's secretary reported that EmbOffs were at hotel communicating with Embassy by phone and radio.
- 1203 (0233) Embassy reported Police Commissioner's assurances DRA has no intentions of using force and that they would consult DCM before taking any action.
- 1207 (0237) It became clear to EmbOffs at hotel that assault being prepared. When informed, DCM urgently requested EmbOffs seek delay. EmbOffs reported to Embassy that they could not influence action on scene because assault force under orders from higher officials. EmbOff urged Soviet advisor to seek delay, but was told it was Afghan police matter.
- 1210 (0240) Embassy reported by direct line that DCM on phone to Deputy Foreign Minister Dost urging restraint. Working Group officer on direct line expressed Department's concurrence.
- 1215 (0245) Quainton advised on direct line Department's full concurrence with Embassy's efforts; suggested influential Ambassadors or religious leaders might appeal to GOA, and advised that message enroute from Secretary Vance.
- 1215 (0245) EmbOff phoned Embassy from Interior Ministry to say he was unable to see Police Commissioner.
- 1217 (0247) At hotel, additional Afghan security officers took up positions near Room 117.

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- 1230 (0300) DRA military officer in charge gave instructions to Police Commissioner's assistant who went upstairs. EmbOff passed message to Police Commissioner through secretary to do nothing to endanger Ambassador.
- 1230 (0300) EmbOff on direct line reported DRA planning assault. Bad phone connection resulted in delay before complete report understood that action was to be forced within 8 minutes. Working Group reiterated instructions that DRA be urged not to take any action which might harm Dubs.
- 1235 (0305) Embassy/direct line reported that an EmbOff had been sent to find Amin to urge he stop assault.
- 1242 (0312) Embassy/direct line reported DRA had rejected terrorists' demands.
- 1245 (0315) EmbOff called Embassy from Interior Ministry and again was instructed to stress cautionary message since Embassy had information that DRA planned to assault in 2 minutes. EmbOff passed message to Police Commissioner through secretary. Clear to EmbOffs at hotel in corridor outside Room 117 that police had received orders to assault. Police took up assault positions. Non-participants were required to take positions of safety.
- 1425 (0315) Embassy/direct line reported EmbOff was told Amin was unavailable to see him.
- 1247 (0317) Working Group officer read to EmbOff on direct line the Secretary's instruction that DCM convey to highest levels of DRA the Secretary's

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- 1247 (0317) personal request that nothing be done to
(contd) jeopardize Dubs' safety.
- 1250 (0320) Working Group phoned DIA that an assault on
the hotel room was anticipated in 2 minutes.
- 1250 (0320) Embassy officers at hotel heard heavy gunfire
in corridor, in the room and from across the
street; single shot and automatic weapons
fire were heard with initial burst lasting
40 seconds. Soviet advisors used hand
signals to cut off sniper fire. Three
more bursts were heard inside room,
then silence.
- 1254 (0324) Embassy/direct line reported that police had
attacked room and that Dubs was wounded.
Consecutive reports indicated the Ambassador
was badly wounded and being tended by
Regional Medical Officer. Finally, at
1256 (0325) Embassy/direct line relayed
radio report from EmbOff that Ambassador
was dead.
- 1255 (0325) EmbOff reported to Embassy from Interior
Ministry that Soviet civilian had emerged
from Police Commissioner's office and left
building with him.
- 1255 (0325) Within minutes after the shootout at the
Kabul Hotel, DCM protested by telephone to
Deputy Foreign Minister Dost noting that
the police action had been taken in total
disregard of our repeated requests not to
use force and recalling Secretary's personal
appeal that no force be used.

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1304 (0334) Working Group instructed Embassy to take all necessary precautions for safety of American personnel and Amcits.

1320 (0350) Working Group phoned JCS to ask for review of positions of available aircraft and possibilities for evacuation of Ambassador Dubs' remains.

1600 (0630) Working Group officer briefed Ambassador Barnes on incident.

1700 (0730) Kabul Radio announced kidnapping and death of Ambassador Dubs and reported President Taraki and Foreign Minister Amin had expressed "deep regrets" and had sent condolence telegrams to President Carter and Secretary Vance.

1725 (0775) Working Group officer briefed Under Secretary Newsom's office on events.

1731 (0801) All posts ordered to lower flags to half mast until interment.

2000 (1030) Embassy officers are taken to Military Hospital to view four bodies of men which DRA claims were involved in the kidnapping.

MORNING Secretary issues statement on incident.

MORNING President issues statement on incident.

2104 (1134) Embassy reminded that DRA should be aware of our expectation that they have taken all necessary steps to protect American lives and asked to advise on a continuing basis of any threats to officials or private Americans.

2330 (1400) Department instructed all diplomatic and consular posts to review security posture in light of events in Tehran and Kabul.

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February 15

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- 0520 (1950)
(2/14) Department Spokesman announced Soviet Ambassador called in by Acting Secretary to receive protest regarding role of Soviet advisors in action by Afghan police. Acting Secretary requested full report.
- 2000 (1030) Special Mission Aircraft departed Andrews AFB for Kabul. Aboard were Ambassador Dubs' widow and brother, two family friends, and an official delegation headed by Ambassador Barnes, Director General of the Foreign Service.
- 2000 (1030) US Ambassador to Moscow Toon reported conversation with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko regarding Soviet role.

February 16

- 1200 (0230) Regional Security Officer arrived from Karachi and subsequently met with Charge and senior staff members for briefing on incident and submitted report on security situation to Department.
- 1200 (0230) Deputy Foreign Minister Dost called on Charge to express condolences and deliver wreath from Foreign Ministry.
- 1800 (0830) Memorial service held at Residence. A middle-level Foreign Ministry official attended. Soviet Ambassador was also present.

February 17

- 0300 (1830)
(2/16) Soviet Ambassador delivered reply to Acting Secretary's protest. Reply denied any Soviet officials responsible for decisions about handling of the terrorists. Acting Secretary replied that US information came from eye-witness accounts.

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February 17

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A.M.

Charge and Country Director called on Deputy Foreign Minister Dost to deliver protest note from Acting Secretary to Foreign Minister Amin. Amin was unable to give Charge an appointment until February 19. Charge informed Dost we would be following up with formal written request for a full DRA report of the incident. Dost denied Soviet participation in incident and offered to do his best to provide a detailed and full report.

0820 (0320)

Special plane carrying Ambassador Dubs' body departed. Minister of Culture and Information, Bareq Shafiee, and two Deputy Ministers for Foreign Affairs (Dost and Mokamel) attended. Soviet Ambassador attended.

February 18

1110 (0140)

Embassy confirmed dispatch of note to Foreign Ministry asking for full DRA report on incident.

2145 (1215)

Special Mission plane carrying Ambassador Dubs' body arrived at Andrews.

February 19

1100 (0130)

Charge and Country Director called on Foreign Minister Amin and reaffirmed USG concern over DRA's handling of the incident. Charge informed Amin US is reviewing its relations with Afghanistan. Amin claimed DRA action was taken to "rescue" the Ambassador, denied consultations had taken place with Soviet advisors, and hoped incident would not affect US-Afghan relations.

1430 (0500)

Embassy officers met with Police Commissioner Taroon.

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February 19

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P.M.

Foreign Minister Amin held press conference. He said US protest is groundless and Afghan intention had been to secure release of Ambassador Dubs. Amin claimed identities of terrorists involved were not known but said the person whose release was demanded was an "extreme leftist adventurer". Amin also said Soviets present at the Kabul Hotel during the incident were not there to give advice.

February 20

1930 (1000)

Funeral service for Ambassador Dubs held at Fort Myer Memorial Chapel, Fort Myer, Virginia. Private interment at Arlington National Cemetery followed.

February 21

Charge called on Soviet Ambassador Puzanov, who denied that any Soviet specialist took part in the Afghan operation.

February 22

2127 (1157)

Afghan Charge informed by NEA Deputy Assistant Secretary of President's decision to reduce economic assistance and terminate military training program as part of USG ongoing review of relations with Afghanistan.

Clearances:
NEA/PAB:R Lorton
EUR/SOV:S Byrnes

M/CT -- 3/5/79

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